

Mr. ASHCROFT. Now, this most recent set of incidents, of course, revealed in the Washington Times today, and in the Washington Post as well, and I am sure in other newspapers across the country, was the subject of a special briefing to Members of the U.S. Senate very recently. I was not a part of that briefing and I do not know what was said at the special briefing, but the information that I am including is information from these news sources. I want to make it clear that I would not be breaching any special information provided to the Senate. I was not a party to it. But the information is well known.

What is perhaps in some measure troubling is that the administration sought to portray this episode with China as a success. They say, "Look what we stopped. Look what we were able to do." They say that China responded more swiftly to our complaints this time, that when we caught them red-handed in the process of breaking their word, they were more ready to admit they were breaking their word. To hear administration officials talk, the swiftness of China's response to the exposure of their proliferation activity is grounds for disregarding that the administration was hoodwinked by the Chinese all along.

Well, the inventory since 1981 is sort of the litany, if you will, of the insistent and nagging record of proliferation violation after proliferation violation upon proliferation violation. These things provided a basis for saying to the administration, we should not trust the Chinese, at least without some record, without some record that proliferation will stop, and yet within days after our CIA labeled the Chinese as the world's worst proliferators, we in this administration seemed ready to believe their next assurance. And, of course, these newspapers indicate that our belief should have been in their practice and policy of the past, which has been a policy of betrayal and a policy of disregard, not a policy of compliance with agreements relating to nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

Who knows what other nuclear assistance projects China has in store with Iran or other rogue regimes. Who knows how many such projects we have not detected, have not called their hand on, have not asked them to stop because we did not know about them. We happen to intercept information here.

Given China's past proliferation record, and given that the 1997 CIA report that called China—and I quote—"the most significant supplier of weapons of mass destruction-related goods and technology to foreign countries"—that was a quote; the CIA labeled them that less than a year ago—it is pretty clear that people of good sense would say, maybe we ought to ask that they be compliant, maybe we ought to ask that they observe their agreements for at least a short interval before we

endow them with our full trust and confidence.

I opposed President Clinton's decision to begin nuclear cooperation with China based on the CIA report, based on this heritage of denying and breaking these agreements. And now the newspapers of this morning, from both the right and the left, if you will, have said that China was in the process of breaking these agreements currently after China has given its word.

In order for United States-China nuclear cooperation to proceed, the President certified to Congress that China—and this is what he certified—"is not assisting and will not assist any non-nuclear-weapon state, either directly or indirectly, in acquiring nuclear explosive devices or the material and components for such devices."

The President's haste to make this certification seriously undermined U.S. counterproliferation credibility, credibility that would be desperately needed just a few weeks later in a confrontation with Saddam Hussein over the same issue of the threat of weapons of mass destruction—not a unique issue.

Mr. President, the startling inconsistencies in this administration's policy regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, these inconsistencies are putting the national security of our country at risk. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright talks about NATO's new central mission as combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The United States almost went to war last month in the Persian Gulf over the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

We still face the prospect of having to use military force to address the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. And yet, in spite of all this, the administration's rhetoric on counterproliferation—in spite of the continuing object lesson of Saddam Hussein and the threat posed by his terrorist government—the Clinton administration has entered into a nuclear cooperation agreement with China, the world's worst proliferator of weapons of mass destruction. And we know, as of this week, that China is repudiating the basis of those agreements.

Just as Saddam Hussein has outmaneuvered this administration to keep his weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, China has outmaneuvered this administration to continue to proliferate weapons of mass destruction to Iran. Not only is Beijing continuing to pursue nuclear assistance to Iran, but, according to the CIA, China is a major supplier to Iran of chemical weapons and missiles technology as well.

I call on the President to put a halt to nuclear cooperation with China. The President, in my opinion, has pursued a policy of blind engagement with the Chinese. It is a policy which disregards the facts, the litany of breaches on the part of the Chinese. It disregards the facts of continuing breaches of their agreements by the Chinese who con-

tinue to proliferate weapons of mass destruction. In light of the reports on China's continuation of proliferation activity, the proposed United States-China summit meeting in June should be reconsidered.

Mr. President, the decision to begin nuclear cooperation with China was a political one. It was driven by the administration's desire to have a "meaningful" meeting, an event strategy. Well, "meaningful" events cannot replace substantive foreign policy. We cannot say in one part of the world to Saddam Hussein, "Well, we'll go to war with you over weapons of mass destruction," while we are winking at someone else, saying, "Well, it's OK if you continue to break your word and proliferate weapons of mass destruction" to equally dangerous rogue regimes. It undermines America's credibility in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is not worth the photo-op that we get from the Chinese by having a summit if we have to destroy our policy and threaten the security of this globe to do it.

I believe that it is time for us to have a policy, a policy that is unmistakable and clear and a policy that is respected, that weapons of mass destruction are not to be tolerated and that the United States will not extend privileges of nuclear cooperation to those who would take nuclear resources and make them available to rogue nations as weapons of mass destruction.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's 10 minutes has expired.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I yield the floor and thank the Chair.

Mr. GLENN addressed the Chair.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### CONGRATULATIONS, SENATOR FORD

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, earlier today Senator DASCHLE, our minority leader, made some remarks in tribute to the longest-serving Senator from Kentucky to serve in the U.S. Senate, and that is WENDELL FORD, our minority whip.

I wanted to add my words of congratulations, in recognition of this person that I believe to be one of our most outstanding U.S. Senators. He is a very dedicated public servant. He is also a good personal friend. He is the senior Senator from Kentucky, WENDELL FORD. I don't think it is any accident that the people of Kentucky have returned WENDELL time after time, one election after another, to where he now has served here almost a quarter of a century.

WENDELL, of course, is a very personable person. He likes people. I think that was evidenced early in his career when I believe he was national president of the Jaycees. Later on, the people of Kentucky, after having elected him Governor for a term, then elected him to the U.S. Senate. He has served them well here over the last nearly

quarter of a century. I had the honor and privilege to serve alongside him for all that time since he came to the Senate. He and I were sworn in at about the same time, and for the first few years we were here, by the luck of the draw, we sat side by side in the Senate Chamber. That was back in the time period when we had many all-night sessions, and you got to know a person pretty well when you sat and shared views with them during some of those extended debates and lengthy all-night sessions.

WENDELL is certainly known for his wit and humor. I remember once we were sitting here about 3:30 or 4 o'clock in the morning and a debate was going on. WENDELL nudged me and said, "You know, John, the people back home think we are the ones that won." I got a kick out of that. We were going through some very troubled times in the U.S. Senate at that time.

The Senate class of 1974 was one that I think was remarkable not only because I happened to be one of those people but because it came in on the tail-end of Watergate. Watergate played an issue in that year's election. But the people we elected that year included a number of outstanding public officials who would continue illustrious public careers, including John Culver, Robert Morgan, Paul Laxalt, James Jake Garn, Gary Hart, and four Senators still serving—myself and Senators FORD, BUMPERS, and LEAHY. With the announced retirements that we have already, Senator LEAHY will be the only representative out of that class of 1974 still remaining at the end of this year.

The distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Senator FORD, has served on the Senate Rules Committee for many years, been chairman and ranking member. He became an expert on disputed elections quite early on in his service, because one of the first issues that that class of 1974 faced in the Senate was the disputed election in New Hampshire between John Durkin and Louis Wyman. In that case, the Senate determined that a new election was necessary. So WENDELL got tossed into that maelstrom of disputed elections very early on. I say that hasn't ended through all these years either, because even during this last year he worked toward a successful solution in the Louisiana election dispute.

I can say without any contradiction that Senator FORD is truly a Senator's Senator. He is rarely on the floor making long speeches and posturing before the camera. That is rare. In fact, he never does that. But his voice is heard. His influence is heard on almost all issues, because the Senate, his fellow Senators on the Democratic side, sought at this time to elect him as our whip, our No. 2 person in the hierarchy of leadership in the Senate.

I think Senator FORD would appreciate the fact, coming from Kentucky—and I have heard him make comments about the horses, and all of his atten-

tion to the horses in Kentucky, and the big business that is in Kentucky, and his attention to things like the Kentucky Derby and so on. But he would appreciate it that we know him as a "workhorse," not just as a show horse, here in the U.S. Senate. He is always working behind the scenes for whatever the interests are of the party or his interests for Kentucky. And he has provided strong leadership in his ability as a negotiator and his talents for finding compromise that have served both parties and the Nation extraordinarily well.

He has been in the forefront of many issues during his career in the Senate, including such more recent things in just the last few years as motor-voter legislation, trying to make sure that every person in this country has a maximum opportunity to exercise the right to vote. Lobbying reform and campaign finance reform have been of particular interest in recent years.

Of course, Kentucky is first. I just wish I could say that I have been as tireless an advocate for Ohio as he has been for Kentucky, because even when we have disagreed on things, we find a way to work them out. WENDELL represents Kentucky and the interests of the people of Kentucky first. That comes out all the time. He and I have worked together on matters of mutual interest, including the regional airport in Cincinnati and Department of Energy facilities that are both in Kentucky and in Ohio.

As I mentioned earlier today, Senator FORD's service in the Senate will surpass the length of surface of Alben Barkley, who had previously been the longest-serving Senator from Kentucky. Senator FORD will have served longer than any other Kentuckian in the Senate, including such statesmen as Henry Clay, John Breckenridge, Happy Chandler, and John Sherman Cooper.

I think WENDELL FORD adds an illustrious career that matches any of those other people the great State of Kentucky has sent to the Senate through the years. With WENDELL, you always know where you stand, but he also knows how to disagree without being disagreeable at the same time.

He is known for his wit, humor, and intense discussions. He knows how to break the tension with a little humor, a joke, or something that applies.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention one other thing, and that is his dedication to his family—Jean, his wife, and his children and grandchildren. I remember last August, when other Senators were talking about what trips they were planning, and I asked WENDELL if he was planning to travel, he said, "Yep; I'm going to travel to Kentucky to go fishing with the grandchildren." That is exactly what he did, and I'm sure the grandchildren were the better off for it.

So I'm pleased to join my colleagues in recognition of the long service of Senator WENDELL FORD. He has been a

very valued colleague and a personal friend to me in the Senate. His company will truly be one of the things I will miss next year, and I think, most of all, the people of Kentucky are going to miss the kind of leadership he has provided. We are here today not to talk about that, but to recognize that today marks the day when he becomes the longest-serving Senator to ever serve from the State of Kentucky. I want to recognize him for that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 2646

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to Calendar No. 227, H.R. 2646, the education individual retirement accounts bill, and it be considered under the following agreement.

Before I make this request, I do want to say again how much I appreciate all the cooperation we had on the ISTEIA bill. I think it is an example of what we can do when we work together on important legislation in a bipartisan way, and also across the aisle, the bipartisan support we had on the China human rights resolution, and on the resolution naming Saddam Hussein as a war criminal.

This has been a very productive week. I hope we can find a way to do the same thing again next week. I would like for us to find a way to consider in the fairest possible procedure this very important education bill, the Coverdell A+ bill which does include, in addition to the Coverdell A+ provisions with regard to saving for your children's education, a special provision for a prepaid tuition deduction, and for a deduction of graduate education expenses. Those last two items were requested by a bipartisan group. We have other important matters that I believe will be bipartisan, including dealing with NATO enlargement. So I hope we can find a way to come to an agreement on how to proceed on these bills.

So I would like to now go through the agreement that I have been seeking. I understand that Senator DURBIN will have some reaction once I get to the end of this.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the reporting of the bill by the clerk, the chairman of the Finance Committee be recognized to send an amendment to the desk reflecting the Finance Committee action on the Coverdell bill. I further ask unanimous consent that following the ascertaining of this consent, Senator DASCHLE be recognized to